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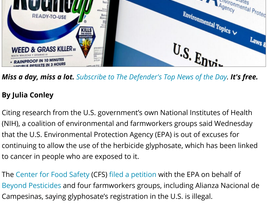
'Out of Excuses': 'Groundbreaking' Legal Petition Demands EPA Ban Glyphosate

Citing research from the National Institutes of Health, a coalition of environmental and farmworkers on Wednesday took legal action by filing a petition with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency calling for an immediate ban of glyphosate, the key ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup weedkiller.

By Common Dreams



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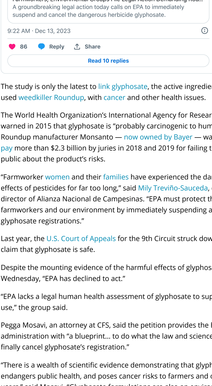
By Julia Conley

Citing research from the U.S. government's own National Institutes of Health (NIH), a coalition of environmental and farmworkers groups said Wednesday that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is out of excuses for continuing to allow the use of the herbicide glyphosate, which has been linked to cancer in people who are exposed to it.

The Center for Food Safety (CFS) filed a petition with the EPA on behalf of Beyond Pesticides and four farmworkers groups, including Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, saying glyphosate's registration in the U.S. is illegal.

The petition was filed a week after cancer scientists at the NIH published a study in Environmental Health Perspectives, which found that male farmers had "markers of genotoxicity" when they reported high levels of glyphosate use.



The study is only the latest to link glyphosate, the active ingredient in the widely used weedkiller Roundup, with cancer and other health issues.

The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer warned in 2015 that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic to humans," and Roundup manufacturer Monsanto — now owned by Bayer — was ordered to pay more than $2.3 billion by juries in 2018 and 2019 for failing to warn the public about the product's risks.

"Farmworker women and their families have experienced the damaging health effects of pesticides for far too long," said Mily Treviño-Saucedá, executive director of Alianza Nacional de Campesinas. "EPA must protect the nation's farmworkers and our environment by immediately suspending and canceling all glyphosate registrations."

Last year, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit struck down the EPA's claim that glyphosate is safe.

Despite the mounting evidence of the harmful effects of glyphosate, said CFS on Wednesday, "EPA has declined to act."

"EPA lacks a legal human health assessment of glyphosate to support its current use," the group said.

Pegga Mosavi, an attorney at CFS, said the petition provides the Biden administration with "a blueprint... to do what the law and science require and finally cancel glyphosate's registration."

"There is a wealth of scientific evidence demonstrating that glyphosate endangers public health, and poses cancer risks to farmers and other Roundup users," said Mosavi. "Glyphosate formulations are also an environmental hazard and have driven an epidemic of resistant weeds that plague farmers. After last year's court decision, EPA has no legal legs to stand on. EPA must take action now."

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Environmental Health Perspectives also published an opinion article by health researchers who found the NIH study should be considered in glyphosate safety evaluations.

"There is really compelling new science out there," Bill Freese, science director at CFS, told The Guardian. "It's becoming increasingly untenable for the agency to deny the cancer hazard."

The group said the EPA should suspend the use of glyphosate — which is already banned for household use in France, the Netherlands, Belgium and for public use in Germany — until its registration can be canceled or the agency can prove the herbicide meets required safety standards under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

"In accordance with FIFRA, EPA can register a pesticide only upon determining that it will cause no unreasonable adverse effects on the environment when used in accordance with widespread and commonly recognized practice," reads the executive summary of the petition.

"Glyphosate remains registered despite no demonstration by EPA that it can meet the required FIFRA safety standard for this herbicide's currently approved uses. In other words, glyphosate as it's currently used has no legal safety assessment on record."

Freese noted that in the past, the EPA acknowledged glyphosate's adverse effects on the liver, kidneys, reproductive system and its link to cancer.

"But as Monsanto sought ever wider uses for its blockbuster herbicide," said Freese, EPA consigned those incriminating studies to regulatory oblivion, thus facilitating greater use, even as independent scientists confirmed the harms EPA now denies."

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Julia Conley is a staff writer for Common Dreams.

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BChristine
3 days ago
These institutions have been dodging the seriousness and toxicity of glyphosate for YEARS. *Glyphosate needs to be banned altogether NOW.*
4 0 Reply Share

Don't Overthink
3 days ago
If a family member of the EPA died from exposure I'm sure that there would be swift action. Until then, let's follow the money.
2 0 Reply Share

John Stone Mod → Don't Overthink
2 days ago
You'd be surprised - the powerful are addicted usually to their status and if something happens to a close relative which would affect their status they turn a blind eye. I've watched this vaccine damage over three decades: in fact most people can be persuaded to deny the evidence of their eyes.
3 0 Reply Share

Marion
3 days ago
I live in France in the countryside. People regularly say that it is wonderful that Glyphosate is banned in France. But as said in the article 'for household use'. So sadly the farmers are still allowed to use it.
Because French farmers have trouble with the meat industry (rules and regulations), they are now more and more focusing on creating corn and rapeseed fields. In Spring and Summer we find dead bees everywhere, our veg gardens hardly produce anymore and the bird population is reduced to silence.
France is therefore no example.
1 0 Reply Share

jerry wrider
2 days ago
I now get acid reflux when I eat any wheat products.
I attribute this to the wheat being sprayed with glyphosate.

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